

## Legalelectric, Inc.

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June 16, 2009

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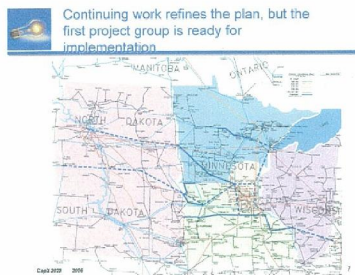
RE: RUS EIS Scoping – CapX 2020 – Phase I

Dear Ms. Strength:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scope of the EIS for CapX 2020.

### **The RUS EIS must address impacts of entire CapX 2020 Phase I -- It's all connected**

CapX 2020 Phase I is the largest transmission project in the history of the State of Minnesota, over 600 miles long and a cost approaching \$2 billion. It is false compartmentalization to claim that only the Hampton-LaCrosse portion of the Capx 2020 Phase I proposal is at issue for the RUS environmental review – the entire project as proposed is subject to review as a phased and connected action, a part of a whole.



### **CapX 2020 was developed as a whole**

CapX 2020 was studied and developed as a whole<sup>1</sup>. This map, Attachment A, is from a CapX 2020 power point presentation to MAPP NM-SPG planning group on June 14, 2006. The blue solid lines are "Phase I," applied for in the Certificate of Need proceeding before the MN PUC, order granting Certificate of Need May 22, 2009. The blue dotted lines are future lines, some of which were announced April 3, 2009. Attachment B is the April 3, 2009, press release regarding those lines.

<sup>1</sup> See CapX 2020 Certificate of Need Application, Appendix A-1, available online at: [CapX2020 Technical Update: Identifying Minnesota's Electric Transmission Infrastructure Needs \(October 2005\)](#)

## B-001-001

Your comment has been noted. While the CapX2020 projects involve four independent projects being developed in a similar time frame with some of the same of utilities participating, the Purpose and Need for the CapX2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV Project was developed and proven independently of the other CapX2020 projects. The Alternative Evaluation Study addresses project Purpose and Need. It is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>, which has been approved by the RUS. Purpose and Need will also be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

**CapX 2020 was presented as a whole**

The CapX 2020 Vision Plan was repeatedly presented by the applicants as a large interconnected web of transmission, not just the Hampton to LaCrosse piece (Hampton, however was not the substation location addressed, it was Prairie Island, until this was changed slightly before the project was applied for in the summer of 2007).

Table 4. Summary of Vision Plan

| Facility Name                         |                                   |           |             |                      |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|----------------------|
| From                                  | To                                | Volt (kV) | Miles       | Cost (\$M)           |
| Alexandria, MN                        | Benton County (St. Cloud, MN)     | 345       | 80          | 60                   |
| Alexandria, MN                        | Maple River (Fargo, ND)           | 345       | 126         | 94.5                 |
| Antelope Valley (Bemish, ND)          | Jamestown, ND                     | 345       | 185         | 138.75               |
| Arrowhead (Duluth, MN)                | Chicago County (Chicago City, MN) | 345       | 120         | 90                   |
| Arrowhead (Duluth, MN)                | Forbes (Northwest Duluth, MN)     | 345       | 60          | 45                   |
| Benton County (St. Cloud, MN)         | Chicago County (Chicago City, MN) | 345       | 59          | 44.25                |
| Benton County (St. Cloud, MN)         | Granite Falls, MN                 | 345       | 110         | 82.5                 |
| Benton County (St. Cloud, MN)         | St. Bonifacius, MN                | 345       | 62          | 45.5                 |
| Blue Lake (Southwest Twin Cities, MN) | Ellendale, ND                     | 345       | 200         | 150                  |
| Chicago County (Chicago City, MN)     | Prairie Island (Red Wing, MN)     | 345       | 82          | 61.5                 |
| Columbia, WI                          | North LaCrosse, WI                | 345       | 80          | 60                   |
| Ellendale, ND                         | Hettinger, ND                     | 345       | 231         | 173.25               |
| Rochester, MN                         | North LaCrosse, WI                | 345       | 60          | 45                   |
| Jamestown, ND                         | Maple River (Fargo, ND)           | 345       | 107         | 80.25                |
| Prairie Island (Red Wing, MN)         | Rochester, MN                     | 345       | 58          | 43.5                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                          |                                   |           | <b>1620</b> | <b>\$1,215 (\$M)</b> |

Exhibit 17, Portion of the 2005 Biennial Report Filed by Transmission Utilities, p. 36; Ex. 1, Application, App. A-1, Technical Update October 2005; see also Exhibit 12, CapX 2020 Update, June 14, 2006; Rogelstad, Vol. 2A, p. 69-74; Rogelstad, Direct Testimony p. 17; Rogelstad, Tr. Vol 2A, p. 39 et seq.

Attachment C is a copy of this chart, an integral part of the record in the CapX 2020 Certificate of Need proceeding before the PUC. The Hampton to LaCrosse line is listed in the CapX 2020 Vision Plan repeatedly as the Prairie Island to Rochester to NorthLaCrosse line above, listed in the 2005 Biennial Report filed by Transmission Utilities (p. 36); the CapX 2020 Certificate of Need Application, App. A-1, Technical Update October 2005, and the CapX powerpoint update, June 14, 2006. Over and over and over, the Hampton-LaCrosse line is presented as just one part of an inextricably linked inseparable network of transmission lines.

#### **CapX 2020 Phase I was applied for as a whole**

The Certificate of Need application was for the Phase I pieces from Fargo to Benton County, from Brookings to Hampton, and Hampton to LaCrosse. Phase I of CapX 2020 from the CapX 2020 website:

##### ***1. Can you tell me more about CapX2020?***

*CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region to expand the electric transmission grid to ensure continued reliable and affordable service. Planning studies show that customer demand for electricity will increase 4,000 to 6,000 megawatts (MW) by 2020. The new transmission lines will be built in phases designed to meet this increasing demand as well as to support renewable energy expansion.*

- *Bemidji-Grand Rapids, 68 miles, 230-kV*
- *Fargo-St. Cloud-Monticello, 250 miles, 345-kV*
- *Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse, 150 miles, 345-kV*
- *Brookings County-Hampton, 200 miles, 345-kV*

*The CapX2020 utilities - investor-owned, electric cooperatives and municipals - include those that serve the majority of customers in Minnesota and the surrounding region.*

[CapX 2020 website.](http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm)

**B-001-002**

The RUS EIS must address impacts for the full CapX 2020 project, including all the lines proposed in Phase I:

- *Bemidji-Grand Rapids, 68 miles, 230-kV*
- *Fargo-St. Cloud-Monticello, 250 miles, 345-kV*
- *Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse, 150 miles, 345-kV*
- *Brookings County-Hampton, 200 miles, 345-kV*

#### **Background**

First, in considering the scope of the RUS EIS, what SHOULD and MUST be included, I offer as background the Minnesota Department of Commerce Scope for their "Environmental Report," to show both the limited review and highlight what was expressly excluded from consideration of the state's review of CapX 2020. Attachment D, Scope of ER – Minnesota Department of Commerce<sup>2</sup>. I ask that Attachment D be incorporated by reference into the RUS EIS. 40 CFR 1502.21.

The most important omission by the state was its refusal to acknowledge the anticipated RUS environmental review, stating in the scope:

<sup>2</sup> MN Dept. of Commerce ER Scoping Document, available online: <http://nocapx2020.info/wp-content/uploads/2008/02/environmentalreport-scope.pdf>

#### **B-001-002**

Your comment has been noted.

While the CapX2020 projects involve four independent projects being developed in a similar time frame with some of the same of utilities participating, the Purpose and Need for the CapX2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV Project was developed and proven independently of the other CapX2020 projects. The Alternative Evaluation Study addresses project Purpose and Need and is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>, which has been approved by the RUS. Purpose and Need will also be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

It is not possible to associate this environmental review with any federal review at this time. Minnesota Rule 4410.3900 anticipates coordinating state and federal review where possible. However, the association is not possible in this case due to timing and relevance. First, completion of this ER is required for the contested case hearing prior to when any application initiating potential federal review would be filed.

B-001-008

We all know very well that the RUS EIS was pending. It is the duty of applicants to work with RES in anticipation of environmental review and to apply NEPA early in the process. 7 CFR 1794.11. The applicant instead did its best to distance the Certificate of Need environmental review from federal review. The state bought into this framing, and specifically disavowed any knowledge of necessary RUS environmental review despite numerous comments regarding RUS review in the scoping process:

Additionally, no application for a permit or funds from the Rural Utility Service is anticipated by any of the applicants. No action requiring a federal EIS is anticipated. If that situation were to change when any route applications are filed, the Department would pursue all opportunities to coordinate the EIS reviews in those proceedings with any relevant federal agency reviews.

Attachment D.

This statement by Commerce in the state scope is contrary to facts known at the time. Many comments were made in the scoping meetings regarding the necessity of federal review of this project, but they were unreasonably dismissed. By refusing to acknowledge the expected RUS environmental review and to cooperate in federal environmental review, the state circumvented thorough environmental review encompassing all issues as required under federal rules.

B-001-003

The scope of state review was also deficient in that it specifically excluded consideration of the impacts of the likelihood that CapX 2020 would facilitate coal generation and emissions:

The ER will not review impacts of specific energy sources in addressing the project, such as carbon outputs from coal-generated facilities or environmental impacts from a wind generation installation. The proposal is a set of transmission lines designed, as stated, to serve local needs and to improve the access of Minnesota renewable energy sources onto the grid. Transmission operates irrespective of the source of energy and is managed on the grid by the Midwest Independent System Operators independent of generation type. Therefore, these transmission lines are not directly associated with any particular source. This project differs from others designed to accommodate or compensate for the connection of a proposed generating facility onto the grid.

This exclusion of impacts by claiming the lines are not associated with any specific generation is not consistent with the record which clearly states that while the transmission owners cannot discriminate in provision of transmission services, a large portion of the capacity may well be coal. The scope of the RUS EIS must include impact of this line if it is used for various capacity ranges of coal.

**The RUS EIS must address various scenarios of enabling coal generation**

The capacity of each of the lines is 4,100 per testimony in the Certificate of Need case, and the wind lobby talks of getting 700MW of wind, meaning that capacity attributable PERHAPS to

**B-001-003**

Your comment has been noted. The RUS does not have jurisdiction over the State of Minnesota Certificate of Need evaluations or content of those proceedings.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at

<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.



wind is about 1/6 of capacity and the rest would likely be coal. The RUS EIS should address impacts assuming various percentages of coal:

- o 10% - 410 MW
- o 30% - 1,230 MW
- o 50% - 2,050 MW
- o 75% - 3,033 MW
- o 85% - 3,485 MW

For the megawatt ranges, it is rather simple to calculate coal emissions for old pulverized coal units, supercritical coal units, and IGCC (without capture as carbon capture is not expected anytime soon) and address emissions at the various percentage levels of each.

**B-001-004** | **The RUS EIS must independently verify need claim**

In the state's Environmental Report, the applicant's need claims were accepted and presumed without independent verification. In today's reality of significantly decreased demand, and governmentally mandated and consumer driven conservation efforts, need claims must be substantiated

**B-001-005** | **The RUS EIS must address reasonable system alternatives**

I also draw to your attention to specific parts of the state "Environmental Report," which demonstrates failure to adequately examine system alternatives, and unreasonable limitation of alternatives. Attachment E, F, Minnesota Department of Commerce Environmental Report<sup>3</sup> and maps. Passing off this "Environmental Report" as environmental review is contrary to the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act, the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act, and National Environmental Policy Act. I ask that Attachment E and F be incorporated by reference into the RUS EIS. 40 CFR 1502.21.

**The RUS EIS must address system alternatives, independently and combined**

The RUS EIS must address system alternatives were rejected if they could not, alone, address the presumed need. System alternatives include conservation, efficiency, SmartGrid distribution to level out load peaks, generalized load shifting, local generation (i.e., the planned Rochester West End gas plant, SE Minnesota wind generation), and siting of generation without new transmission, i.e., Minnesota's Distributed Renewable Generation Study.

**B-001-006** | **The RUS EIS must address impacts on river crossings of Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers and National and Minnesota Scenic Byways**

The planned and alternative routes for CapX 2020 would cross the Minnesota River and the Minnesota River Scenic Byway twice, and would cross the Mississippi River and the Mississippi

<sup>3</sup> MN Dept. of Commerce Environmental Report, available online in two parts:  
Attachment E - Environmental Report <http://nocapx2020.info/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/environmental-report2.pdf>  
Attachment F - Environmental Report, Maps: <http://nocapx2020.info/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/environmental-report-maps.pdf>

**B-001-004**

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at:  
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

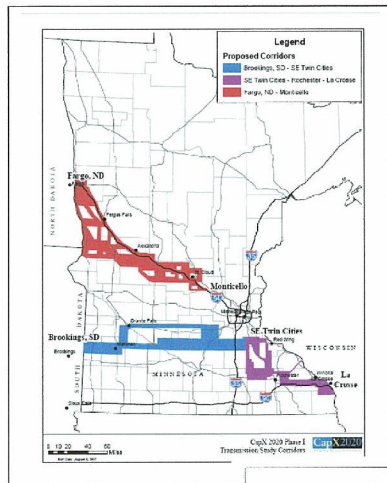
**B-001-005**

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

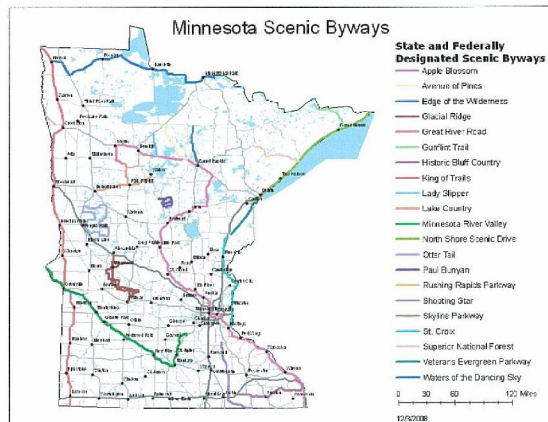
**B-001-006**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

River Scenic Byway. Both river valleys contain protected wildlife areas that would be affected by the crossings and the impacts must be analyzed.



The corridors for CapX 2020 cover much of the state, crossing or paralleling the Mississippi River and the Minnesota River. The State of Minnesota has designated twenty-two (22) select roadways as scenic byways, encompassing more than 2,800 miles of statewide scenic routes ranging in length from a short 9-mile scenic byway to the Great River Road covering 575 miles. Six Minnesota byways are also federally designated as National Scenic Byways, but all 22 byways fall under the National Scenic Byways Program, which is part of the U.S. DOT, Federal Highway Administration. A comparison of CapX maps with the Minnesota Scenic Byways map<sup>4</sup>, as above, demonstrates that multiple scenic byways will be impacted by the project. See CapX 2020 Public Hearing Transcript, Tab 19, Rochester, 7:00 p.m. July 2, 2008.



<sup>4</sup> National Scenic Byways Program <http://www.byways.org/>  
Explore Minnesota Tourism Scenic Byways Page One  
<http://exploreminnesota.com/experiences/byways/index.aspx?gclid=CKfD9ZPaqZcCFQ8QagodL1nKjw>  
Explore Minnesota Tourism Scenic Byways Page Two  
<http://exploreminnesota.com/experiences/byways/drives.aspx>

**The RUS EIS must address the many acres of wetlands in the footprint of CapX 2020**

**B-001-007**

How many acres of wetlands will be affected by the CapX 2020 project? How would impacts on that many acres be mitigated?

I'll be forwarding more comprehensive Comments throughout the next two weeks. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this Comment.

Very truly yours,



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**Enclosures:**

**Attachment A** – Slide 7, CapX 2020 power point presentation to MAPP NM-SPG planning group on June 14, 2006

**Attachment B** – April 3, 2009, press release, showing extensions from ND and to WI

**Attachment C** – Vision Plan Cart, found in 2005 Biennial Report filed by Transmission Utilities (p. 36); the CapX 2020 Certificate of Need Application, App. A-1, Technical Update October 2005, and the CapX powerpoint update, June 14, 2006.

**Attachment D** – Scope of ER – Minnesota Department of Commerce

**Attachment E** – Environmental Report NOT ATTACHED — available online at

<http://nocapx2020.info/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/environmental-report2.pdf>

**Attachment F** - Environmental Report, Maps NOT ATTACHED — available online at:

<http://nocapx2020.info/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/environmental-report-maps.pdf>

**B-001-007**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wetlands will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

**B-001-008**

Your comment has been noted. The RUS does not have jurisdiction over the State of Minnesota Certificate of Need evaluations or content of those proceedings.

**From:** Sandok, Mary R. [<mailto:Mary.R.Sandok@xcelenergy.com>]

**Sent:** Friday, April 03, 2009 9:50 AM

**To:** undisclosed-recipients

**Subject:** News Release: Upper Midwest Utilities Identify Electric Transmission Upgrades To Meet Renewable Energy Standard Milestones

**Contact Information**

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Mary Sandok, Xcel Energy

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**News Release**

**April 3, 2009**

**Upper Midwest Utilities Identify Electric Transmission Upgrades**

**To Meet Renewable Energy Standard Milestones**

**Improvements Necessary in Wisconsin to Maintain System Stability**

MINNEAPOLIS — Upper Midwest utilities have identified improvements needed in the region's high-voltage electricity transmission system to ensure they can deliver the renewable energy necessary to meet Minnesota's renewable energy milestones beginning in 2016.

Minnesota's 2007 Next Generation Energy Act requires that utilities increase renewables on their systems in increments and by 2025 deliver 25 percent of their energy from renewable sources (Xcel Energy is required to deliver 30 percent by 2020). It's estimated that 4,000 to 6,000 megawatts of renewable energy will be needed to meet Minnesota's Renewable Energy Standard. North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin have 10 percent by 2015 renewable energy targets.

The utilities identified transmission needs in studies published this week. The studies can be downloaded at [www.minnelectrans.com](http://www.minnelectrans.com).

The studies confirmed that replacing a 60-year-old 230-kilovolt line that runs between Granite Falls and Shakopee with a double-circuit 345-kilovolt line would unlock up to 2,000 megawatts of transmission capacity from wind-rich areas in southern and western Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

"Upgrading the 230-kilovolt line is the most cost-effective way to meet the 2016 renewable energy standard milestone," said Kent Larson, transmission vice president at Xcel Energy. "The upgrade will optimize capacity from the CapX2020 Group 1 lines, which are moving through the permitting processes, and serve as the next phase of our regional transmission build out to efficiently deliver wind power to our customers."

The 125-mile line would cost an estimated \$350 million, with an additional \$110 million for underlying system improvements.

The studies also found that further upgrades in Minnesota and the Dakotas (beyond the 230-kilovolt line upgrade) will not provide significant benefit prior to installation of a high-voltage transmission line between the La Crosse, Wis., area and the Madison, Wis., area. Without a line to the east of Minnesota, the transmission system will reach a "tipping point" where reliability is compromised, according to the studies. The studies found that the combination of the new 345-kilovolt double circuit line between Granite Falls and Shakopee and a new Wisconsin line would increase the transmission system transfer capability by 1,600 megawatts for a total increase — with the 2,000 megawatts from the new 345-kilovolt line in Minnesota — of approximately 3,600 megawatts.

A joint transmission planning study now under way by several utilities aims to determine the need for a new transmission line between La Crosse and Madison. The study is expected to be completed by 2010.

"The renewable energy requirements of states in the Upper Midwest will be efficiently met with further 345-kilovolt transmission line expansion," said Will Kaul, transmission vice president at Great River Energy. "Policy changes, such as the passage of a national renewable energy standard, may lead to the consideration of a 765-kilovolt overlay. However, the 345-kilovolt projects identified in the studies conducted by the Upper Midwest transmission-owning utilities are still required as a foundational component of a 765-kilovolt overlay."

**Exhibit A: Sandok Press Release, April 3, 2009**



#### Study Details

- The studies were sponsored by Minnesota load-serving utilities, including: Basin Electric Cooperative (also representing East River Electric Power Cooperative and L&O Power Cooperative), Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, Dairyland Power Cooperative, Great River Energy, Heartland Consumers Power District, Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, Minnesota Power, Minnkota Power Cooperative, Missouri River Energy Services (also representing Hutchinson Utilities Commission and Marshall Municipal Utilities), Northern States Power Co.-Minnesota, an Xcel Energy company, Otter Tail Power Company, Rochester Public Utilities, Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, and Willmar Municipal Utilities.
- The study teams conferred with the state Office of Energy Security's technical review committee, which includes representatives from the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security staff, wind advocacy organizations, the Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator and other regional transmission planners.
- Utility transmission planning engineers – representing transmission owners in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Manitoba – were consulted to gather information on new generation data and the accuracy of transmission modeling through 2016.
- For the purposes of Minnesota Renewable Energy Standard compliance, the study teams assumed that wind-energy generation would be the primary source of generation developed.

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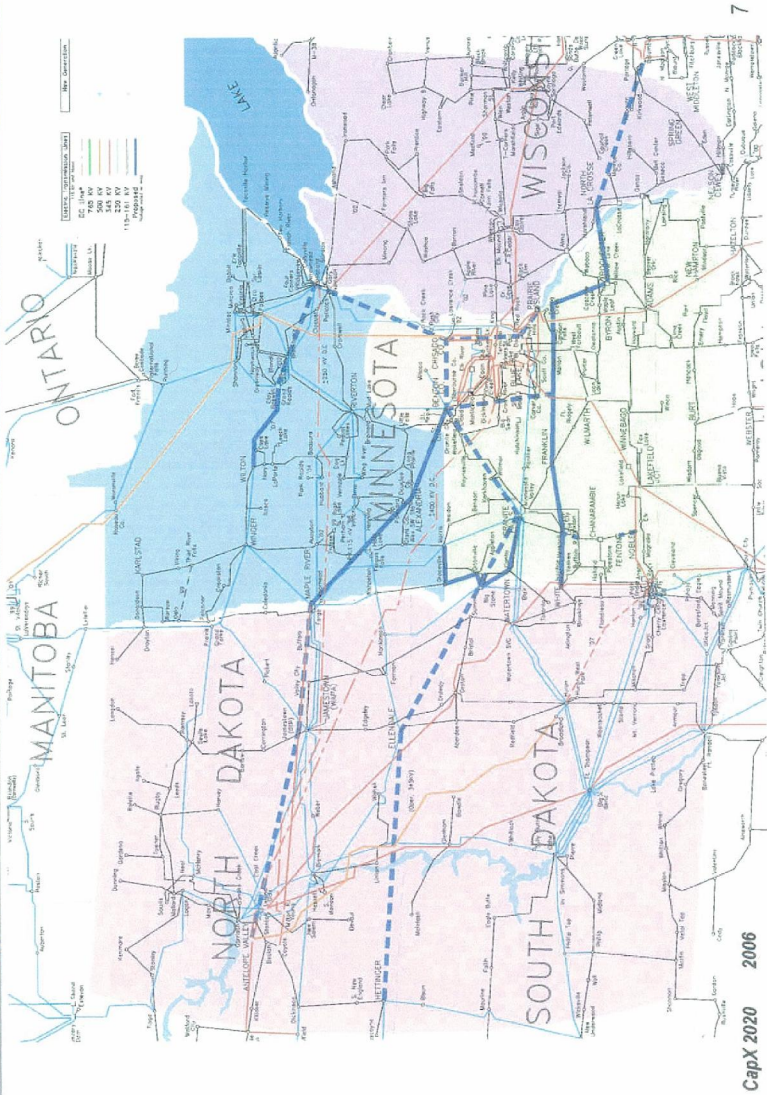
Also found on Xcel Energy's website:

<http://www.xcelenergy.com/Company/Newsroom/Pages/NewsRelease2009-04-03UpperMidwestUtilitiesIdentifyElectricTransmissionUpgrades.aspx>

**Exhibit A: Sandok Press Release, April 3, 2009**



Continuing work refines the plan, but the first project group is ready for implementation



CapX 2020 2006

Table 4. Summary of Vision Plan

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**In the Matter of the Application of Great  
River Energy, Xcel Energy and Others for  
a Certificate of Need for the CapX 2020  
345-kV Transmission Projects**

**ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT  
SCOPING DECISION**

**PUC Docket No. ET02, E002/CN-06-1115**

The above matter has come before the Commissioner of the Department of Commerce (the Department) for a decision on the content of the Environmental Report (ER) to be prepared in consideration of the Xcel Energy, et al., Application for a Certificate of Need for three, 345 kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission lines (HVTL) in Minnesota. According to Minnesota Rule 7849.7030:

The Commissioner of the Department of Commerce shall prepare an environmental report on a proposed high voltage transmission line or a proposed large electric power generating plant at the need stage. The environmental report must contain information on the human and environmental impacts of the proposed project associated with the size, type, and timing of the project, system configurations, and voltage. The environmental report must also contain information on alternatives to the proposed project and shall address mitigating measures for anticipated adverse impacts. The commissioner shall be responsible for the completeness and accuracy of all information in the environmental report.

An ER provides a high level environmental analysis of the proposal and system alternatives, and reviews environmental impacts associated with named and alternative project corridors. The ER does not take the place of an EIS that would evaluate route alternatives, nor is it comparable in scope. It is only one part of a larger Department investigation of the Certificate of Need Application. The Department in its overall review will address in detail all the issues and alternatives required by rule.

The Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Facilities Permitting (EFP) Unit held public information meetings on December 10, 11, 13, 17 and 18 in Moorhead, Fergus Falls, Alexandria, Clearwater, Winona, Rochester, Marshall, Olivia, Arlington, and Cannon Falls to inform the public about the project and the regulatory proceedings; discuss environmental, social and economic issues of importance in the area potentially affected; and to gather public input into the scope of the Environmental Report to be prepared for the project. The meetings provided the public an opportunity to ask questions about the project and to suggest alternatives and specific impacts to address in the ER. The public was given until January 14, 2008, to submit written comments. Fifty-four written comments were received.



Having reviewed the matter, and having consulted with staff, I hereby make the following Order on the content of the ER:

#### **MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED**

The ER will address the following subjects/matters for the proposed project:

##### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The ER will describe the proposed project, right-of-way requirements, location, purpose, and proposed design.

##### **REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

The ER will describe the regulations and regulatory processes which the project is being reviewed under, including the Certificate of Need, environmental review, and the public participation process.

##### **ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT**

The ER will describe and analyze the feasibility of the following alternatives:

- No-build alternative,
- Conservation alternative,
- Existing line or system improvements,
- Generation alternative, and
- Use of alternative corridors.

##### **ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

The ER will describe the environmental setting within the project area and analyze the avoidable and unavoidable impacts of and mitigation measures for the proposed project corridors, including data specific to each of the Fargo, LaCrosse and Brookings projects respectively. As appropriate, data may include:

- Impacts on human settlement: socioeconomic, displacement, noise, aesthetics, radio and television interference, archeological and historic resources, human health and safety (including electric and magnetic fields, and safety codes).
- Impacts on land-based economics: recreation, prime farmland, transportation, mining and forestry, and economic development.
- Impacts on natural environment: air quality, water quality (including surface water, groundwater and wetlands), soils and geology, flora and fauna, rare and unique natural resources

##### **PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUIRED**

The ER will describe the federal, state and local permits anticipated to build the project.

### ISSUES OUTSIDE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

The ER will not consider the impacts or mitigative measures associated with specific routes within the proposed corridors. Site specific concerns (i.e., along specific routes) will be addressed in separate PUC permitting proceedings for each of the three line proposals expected to be filed sometime in late 2008. The ER will only identify the general potential impacts from the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed HVTLs along the broad geographic areas proposed, and the measures generally available to mitigate these potential impacts.

The ER will not review impacts of specific energy sources in addressing the project, such as carbon outputs from coal-generated facilities or environmental impacts from a wind generation installation. The proposal is a set of transmission lines designed, as stated, to serve local needs and to improve the access of Minnesota renewable energy sources unto the grid. Transmission operates irrespective of the source of energy and is managed on the grid by the Midwest Independent System Operators independent of generation type. Therefore, these transmission lines are not directly associated with any particular source. This project differs from others designed to accommodate or compensate for the connection of a proposed generating facility onto the grid.

It is not possible to associate this environmental review with any federal review at this time. Minnesota Rule 4410.3900 anticipates coordinating state and federal review where possible. However, the association is not possible in this case due to timing and relevance. First, completion of this ER is required for the contested case hearing prior to when any application initiating potential federal review would be filed.

Additionally, no application for a permit or funds from the Rural Utility Service is anticipated by any of the applicants. No action requiring a federal EIS is anticipated. If that situation were to change when any route applications are filed, the Department would pursue all opportunities to coordinate the EIS reviews in those proceedings with any relevant federal agency reviews.

### SCHEDULE

The ER shall be completed by March 31, 2008, except for those portions which are dependent upon other direct testimony of the Department of Commerce due April 30, 2008.

Signed this 18 day of February, 2008

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

  
Glenn Wilson, Commissioner

June 16, 2009

Ms. Stephanie Strength  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
USDA, RUS  
Engineering and Environmental Staff  
1400 Independence Avenue SW, Stop 1571  
Washington, D.C. 20250-1571

Dale and Suzanne Rohlfling  
2310 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW  
Rochester, MN 55901  
(507) 288-2808

Dear Ms. Strength,

Thank you for coming to Plainview, MN for the CAPX2020 Hampton-Rochester-LaCrosse scoping meeting.

We own and operate a tree farm in Minnesota, Wabasha County, Zumbro Township: T.109N.-R.14W. The northern most route proposal touches our property.

**B-002-001**

This route disregards Minnesota Statute 216E.03, subdivision 7, of the route permit criteria, by fragmenting property and natural/critical habitat. It transects a state designated canoe route, another tree farm, and is the closest to a registered bald eagle nest of all the northern routes crossing the Zumbro River.

This route would devastate the aesthetics, and alter the river bottoms and the riparian ecosystem of this region within the Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest.


**B-002-002**

We ask that you please reinforce the use of existing corridors, road, rail and energy lines, when choosing the final route, pursuant to the above mentioned MN Statute.

Enclosed is a letter sent to Tom Hillstrom of Xcel Energy in April of 2009 with specific impacts of the route, area map, and photos.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Respectfully yours,



Dale and Suzanne Rohlfling  
[Drohl24057@aol.com](mailto:Drohl24057@aol.com)  
[Caraway57@aol.com](mailto:Caraway57@aol.com)

### **B-002-001**

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

### **B-002-002**

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

April 2, 2009

Mr. Thomas Hillstrom  
Supervisor, Siting and Permitting  
Mr. Grant Stevenson  
Senior Project Manager  
Xcel Energy  
414 Nicollet Mall (MP 8A)  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Mazeppa/Zumbro-Hyde  
Citizens/Landowners  
c/o Suzanne Rohlfing  
2310 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NW  
Rochester, MN 55901

Dear Mr. Hillstrom and Mr. Stevenson,

We are citizens and land owners of Mazeppa and Zumbro-Hyde Townships, Wabasha County. We are responding to the most recent route change proposals for the CAPX2020 transmission line. These routes were displayed at the community meeting in Zumbro Falls at the Zumbro Community Church on Thursday, February 26, 2009. Mr. Grant Stevenson attended and spoke to the group at that meeting.

We would like to express our concerns and address them for you with respect to the **Public Utilities Commission Minnesota Administrative Rules, 7849.5910 "Factors Considered"**.

B-002-003

**Factor A.** "effects on human settlement, including, but not limited to, displacement, noise, aesthetics, cultural values, recreation and public services" The new proposals appear to have no less effect on settlement. There would be, however, increased effects on recreation for the following reasons: 1- this stretch of the Zumbro River is a designated Minnesota state canoe route, with one of the two most popular routes being from the Zumbro dam to Zumbro Falls, according to the DNR. 2-this stretch of the Zumbro River is used for other water recreation, camping, fishing, sport and hunting by individuals and patrons of local camps/businesses. Aesthetics will clearly be impacted by the 150-foot transmission towers, the transmission lines, and the 150-foot clear cut needed for their maintenance. Many of the area's recreational activities will be adversely affected.

B-002-004

B-002-005

**Factor C.** "effects on land-based economics, including, but not limited to, agriculture, forestry, tourism and mining" Major economic impacts include the following: 1- Steeplechase Ski Area. This four-season resort relies heavily on the present landscape and aesthetics for visitor use of the ski hills themselves and the 5-mile trail network used for hiking, biking, snowmobiling and cross country skiing. Of special consideration are the specifics of downhill ski terrain specifications, leaving only the north half of the property for expansion potential. This business contributes to the local economy through employment, operating expenditures, and contribution to the activity of other local businesses. 2- Two working Tree Farms, sections 15 and 16. The white pine, red pine,

### B-002-003

Your comment has been noted. While RUS does not have jurisdiction over the State of Minnesota Certificate of Need evaluations or those proceedings, however, potential impacts to human settlement and recreation will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

### B-002-004

Your comment has been noted. The RUS does not have jurisdiction over the State of Minnesota Certificate of Need evaluations or content of those proceedings. Potential impacts to the aesthetic quality of the area surrounding the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

### B-002-005

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to social and economic resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.



and black walnut planted on these two properties represent years of invested labor and expense that cannot be compensated. The actual monetary value of these cannot be realized until tree maturity and harvest. The clear cut for the transmission lines and the required maintenance would also prevent further plantings and potential return on the farms. These farms also utilize local businesses for tree and equipment maintenance. 3- The value of any property within sight of the transmission lines will be significantly reduced, as much of the value of rural property in the area derives from the remote setting.

**B-002-006**

**Factor D.** “effects on archaeological and historic resources” Between Wabasha County 70 and south to South Troy, there are historical points of interest. 1- The historic wagon trail north of County 7 and west of Hwy 63. 2-Troy/ South Troy. This includes the old Dale cemetery, the old South Troy town site near the existing cemetery and schoolhouse, the South Troy Church, and the grave of Frederick Ingalls, the infant son of Caroline and Charles Ingalls and brother of Laura Ingalls Wilder. The Historical Society has agreed to enter this site onto their Historical Society List. There is consideration for a historical marker, according to Mr. Allen Whipple, local historian.

**B-002-007**

**Factor E.** “effects on natural environment, including effects on air and water quality, resources and flora and fauna” Environmental effects and conservation concerns of the transmission line and its 150-foot clear cut are numerous. Following are a few examples: 1- This land is part of the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood Forest. Only a small portion is state owned. It was intended to help preserve the river and the land around it. 2- The recently proposed routes would eradicate a significant acreage of forest land, which is also extremely susceptible to erosion. This has multiple implications: a- decreased natural habitat for native wildlife species which impacts food sources, nesting and protective options which then results in reproductive compromise and increase predation susceptibility. b- Increased erosion which contributes to alteration of native flora allowing invasive species, ie. buckthorn, and potential for alteration of shading and temperature fluctuations in the river. c- decreased sources of CO2 absorption and potential sources of carbon credits 3- This part of the Zumbro River has a designated “catch and release” regulation for smallmouth bass. This fishery depends on high water quality, which will be damaged by disturbing the surrounding forests. 4- The river crossing on the most northern route proposal is in close proximity to a registered eagles nest. There is dense eagle activity north of Wabasha County 7 and the green bridge.

**B-002-008**

**Factors H.** “use or paralleling of existing rights-of-way, survey lines, natural division lines and agricultural field boundaries” **& J.** “ use of existing transportation, pipeline, and electrical transmission systems or rights-of-ways” Parts of the most recent route have transected property and do not appear to incorporate the need to parallel or utilize existing rights-of-way, survey lines, and existing transportation and transmissions lines. The primary beneficiaries of the transmission lines are the cities of Rochester and LaCrosse, both of which are serviced by existing transportation rights-of-way, ie: US Highway 52 and Interstate 90. These corridors are the logical routes for the transmission lines.

## **B-002-006**

Your comment has been noted. Impacts to historic and archeological resources affected by the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

## **B-002-007**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife, vegetation, water and air quality will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

## **B-002-008**

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

**B-002-009**

**Factor L.** “costs of constructing, operating, and maintaining the facility which are dependent on design and route” Several of the proposed routes have many corners and angles that add to the cost of construction, and these same routes require significant timber removal expenses. Routes following highways will have fewer corners and timbered areas. Utilizing the angle of US Highway 52 to Oronoco and Interstate 90, rather than using the northern routes, will reduce the length of the lines. These routes will also be constructed primarily on farmland, which does not need to be cleared initially or in the future. The timbered areas on the northern routes would need regular clearing or spraying, both of which carry monetary and ecological costs.

**B-002-010**

We sincerely hope you consider the above mentioned factors, and choose alternately a more appropriate route which has less impact on an area that has minimal existing damage. We also suggest that you consider route proposals closer to Route 52 and Interstate 90, and the cities that this project will benefit: Rochester and LaCrosse.

We thank you for these considerations, and look forward to future contact.

Respectfully submitted,

The Citizens of Mazeppa and Zumbro-Hyde Townships, and other interested parties.

Enclosures

Cc:

Bob Cupit, PUC MN

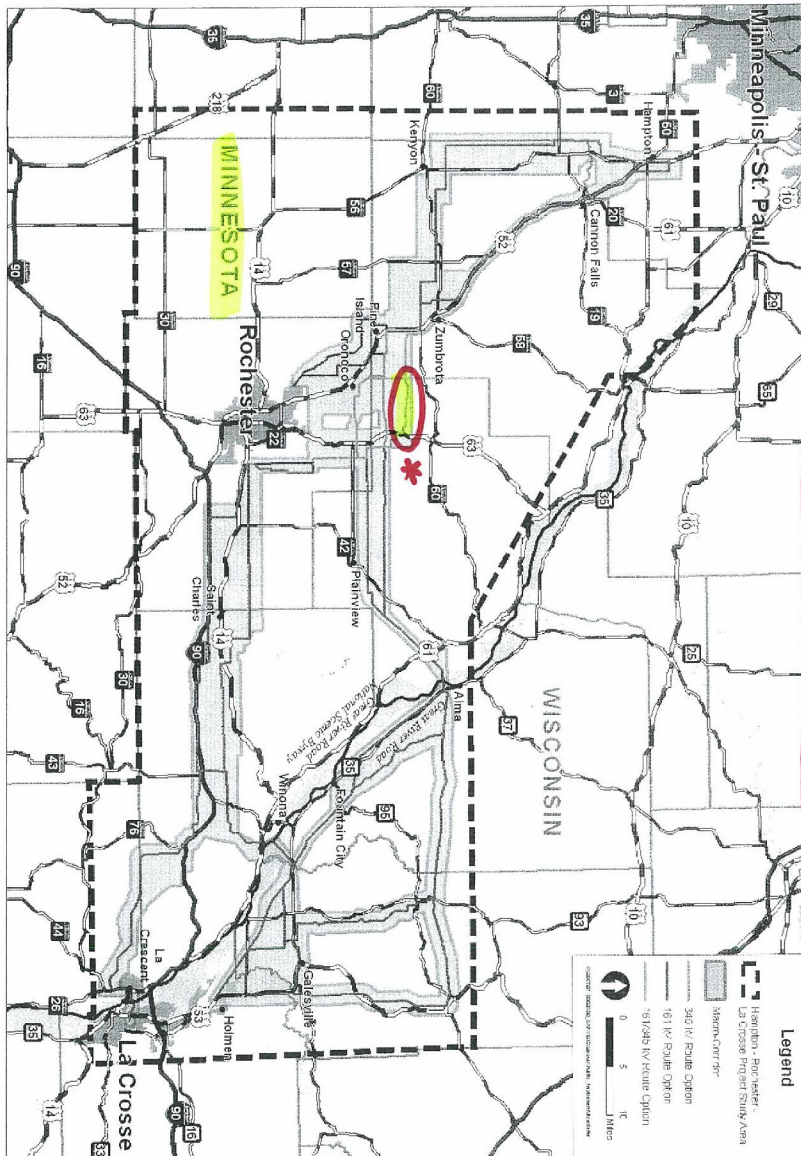
Matt Langan, MN DNR

#### **B-002-009**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts resulting from construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line will be addressed in resource sections throughout the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **B-002-010**

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at:  
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.



**\*: Route of Concern**







Rohlfing Tree Farm

Minnesota

Wabasha County

Zumbro Township

T. 109 N. - R. 14 W

## COMMENT FORM

Public Scoping Meetings

We need your input. Please take a few minutes to provide your comments or questions for the USDA RUS Federal Environmental Impact Statement process and return your completed form today or mail by June 29, 2009. Your comments help in the planning and implementation of the project. **Thank you.**

Completing this form will automatically add you to our mailing list. If you prefer to not be on the mailing list, please check the box below.

☐ I do not wish to be on the project mailing list

Which meeting did you attend? Plainville/Elgin June 16th

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

- ☐ Project Purpose and Need
- ☐ Visual / Aesthetic resources
- ☐ Proximity to residences
- ☐ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)
- ☐ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)
- ☐ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)
- ☒ Historic and cultural sites
- ☐ Radio or television interference
- ☐ Noise
- ☐ Health and safety
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

see next page



Hampton • Rochester • La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project

B-003-001

If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

- ☐ Agriculture      ☐ Residential      ☐ Conservation Easement  
☐ Commercial      ☐ Industrial      ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

Woodland Camp needs to be considered to be preserved. This camp has mentored youth for more than 40 yrs. Land owner donated 25 acres to cause. Going through the middle of it would destroy campsite. Please consider going around. Concerned Neighbor!!

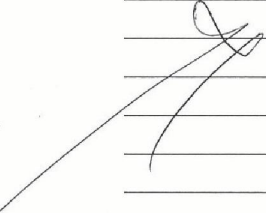
In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, ect.) in the Project area and why?

### B-003-001

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to recreational resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Impacts to land use in areas such as the Woodland Camp will be considered in the Environmental Impact Statement. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "Michael Walker", is written across the first few lines of the response area.

Please tell us how to reach you.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name: Michael Walker  
Representing (Optional): Marta and Anna Mae Norman  
Mailing Address: 56826 395th Ave  
City: Zumbro Falls State: MN Zip Code: 55991  
Daytime Phone (Optional): 507-255-0274

Public participation for the Federal, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permitting processes will be ongoing for the Hampton- Rochester- La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project. If you sign up for the mailing list, you will be notified when opportunities to participate are being planned.

Please plan to continue your involvement in the process and provide your comments. We appreciate your input.



**Bruce Wiese**  
Site Operations Manager



**Syngenta Seeds, Inc.**  
317 330th Street  
Stanton, MN 55018  
Office (507) 663-7605  
Fax (507) 645-7519  
www.syngenta.com  
bruce.wiese@syngenta.com

*Wanamago - June 17, 2009*



June 17, 2009

Subject: CAPX2020 Proposed Power Line Route A120

To Whom It May Concern:

**B-004-002**

Syngenta Seeds is an owner of a 412 acre Research Farm that is directly in the path of the CAPX2020 Proposed Power Line Route A120. Route A120 takes the power line down the west border of our property and within 20 ft. of our lateral move irrigation system.

**B-004-001**

Our immediate concerns are the proximity of the towers to the irrigation system and the possible effects this may have on our GPS reception that we use in moving our irrigation system and on our tractors and planters for field trial planting. Other concerns may surface as the process moves forward.

I look forward to working with you to discuss these and other concerns.

Please add me to any mailing or email lists that are appropriate to keep me informed on the progress of CAPX2020.

Bruce Wiese  
Site Operations Manager  
Syngenta Seeds  
317 330<sup>th</sup> St.  
Stanton, Minnesota 55018

#### **B-004-001**

Your comment has been noted. Interference with electrical equipment caused by the transmission lines will be addressed with individual landowners if the problem arises.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

#### **B-004-002**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to agricultural resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.







B-004 Wiese, Bruce  
Appendix I





B-004 Wiese, Bruce  
Appendix I



B-004 Wiese, Bruce  
Appendix I



## COMMENT FORM

Public Scoping Meetings

We need your input. Please take a few minutes to provide your comments or questions for the USDA RUS Federal Environmental Impact Statement process and return your completed form today or mail by June 29, 2009. Your comments help in the planning and implementation of the project. **Thank you.**

Completing this form will automatically add you to our mailing list. If you prefer to not be on the mailing list, please check the box below.

☐ I do not wish to be on the project mailing list

Which meeting did you attend? Renterville

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

☐ Project Purpose and Need

☒ Visual / Aesthetic resources

☐ Proximity to residences

☐ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)

☐ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)

☐ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)

☐ Historic and cultural sites

☐ Radio or television interference

☐ Noise

☐ Health and safety

☒ Other: We raise trees mostly (No trees near wires)  
Means No trees to have 5'

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

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Hampton • Rochester • La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project

**B-005-001**

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

- ☐ Agriculture      ☐ Residential      ☐ Conservation Easement  
☐ Commercial      ☐ Industrial      ☒ Other: *Basically a Tree Farm*

Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

*FS line goes through Blair we would expect it to be on the West side of existing lines*

In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, ect.) in the Project area and why?

*Loss of Timber Forever*

B-005-001



In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?

*Pretty well*

Please tell us how to reach you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: *Robert Niederkorn*

Representing (Optional): *NiederKorn Farms*

Mailing Address: *118589 Brendtner Rd.*

City: *Galesville* State: *WI* Zip Code: *54630*

Daytime Phone (Optional): *608-582-2216*

Public participation for the Federal, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permitting processes will be ongoing for the Hampton- Rochester- La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project. If you sign up for the mailing list, you will be notified when opportunities to participate are being planned.

Please plan to continue your involvement in the process and provide your comments. We appreciate your input.

From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss](#);  
cc: [Collins, Carly](#);  
Subject: FW: Dairyland Power Cooperative CapX2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:30:13 AM  
Attachments: [Carleton College Dairyland Power CapX2020 comments.pdf](#)

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-----Original Message-----

From: nbraker@carleton.edu [<mailto:nbraker@carleton.edu>]  
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2009 12:25 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Cc: mn02ima@mail.house.gov; sen.kevin.dahle@senate.mn; david@davidbly.com  
Subject: Dairyland Power Cooperative CapX2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project

Hello Ms. Strength:

Attached please find our comments on the Dairyland Power Cooperative CapX2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Nancy Braker  
Director of the Cowling Arboretum  
Lecturer in Biology  
Carleton College  
One North College Street  
Northfield, MN 55057  
507-222-4543  
[nbraker@carleton.edu](mailto:nbraker@carleton.edu)

**Carleton College**  
One North College Street  
Northfield, Minnesota 55057

Nancy C. Braker  
Director of the Cowling Arboretum and Lecturer in Biology

507-222-4543  
nbraker@carleton.edu

Stephanie Strength  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
USDA, Rural Utilities Service  
Engineering and Environmental Staff  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 1571  
Washington, D.C. 20250-1571

[Stephanie.strength@usda.gov](mailto:Stephanie.strength@usda.gov)

June 26, 2009

Re: Comments on the Dairyland Power Cooperative CapX2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse  
Transmission Line Project

Dear Ms. Strength:

I am writing to comment on the above referenced Transmission Line Project. Carleton College has a vested interest in this project due to our ownership of an important tallgrass prairie remnant located in Goodhue County, within ¼ mile of one of the proposed routes.

McKnight Prairie was purchased by the College in 1968 in order to provide a location for faculty and students to study and conduct research on native prairie and the plants and animals found there. Tallgrass prairie, or prairie of any sort, is a rare commodity throughout its range. In Minnesota, less than one-half of one percent of the original prairie remains. McKnight Prairie has been identified by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources as one of the highest quality remnant prairies left in Goodhue County.

**B-006-001**

We strongly favor the eastern of the two proposed routes; that is the one that roughly parallels State Highway 52 as it passes through Goodhue County. This route follows an already developed transportation and utility corridor thereby limiting impact on the rural landscape. In addition to less impact on the agricultural community, this route will have fewer effects on native wildlife, including declining plants, animals and native plant communities.

**B-006-001**

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at:  
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

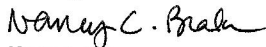
The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

The western of the two routes, the one we do not favor, would directly impact wildlife habitat and the species that use that habitat. In particular, a population concentration the Loggerhead Shrike, a Minnesota threatened species, is found in the area, nesting and foraging for food in the brushy fields and remnant prairies patches that are found throughout this landscape. The shrikes, which frequent McKnight Prairie, nest and forage in the area that would be disrupted by the power line construction and maintenance.

In summary, we strongly encourage you to select the eastern of the two routes, adjacent to Highway 52. This route provides for more efficient land use, and has a limited effect on important natural resources.

Thank you for your careful attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Nancy C. Braker

Cc: Congressman John Kline  
Minnesota State Senator Kevin Dahl  
Minnesota Representative David Bly



From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](mailto:Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss;](mailto:Lilley, Bliss;)  
cc: [Collins, Carly;](mailto:Collins, Carly;)  
Subject: FW: Capx2020 Project concerns  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:31:34 AM

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From: Mrsprchal@aol.com [mailto:Mrsprchal@aol.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 10:49 AM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: Capx2020 Project concerns

Dear Stephanie Strength,  
Racetrack of powerlines coming our way?! There is much talk about energy alternatives, conservation and the need for more energy. What worries me is that just in the past months I have heard about solar power from Nevada to power the US, GreenPower Express which already has a map online of possible routes and Phase 2 of CapX 2020 and here we are battling over CapX2020 Phase 1. When asked about the GreenPowerExpress, CapX2020 did not seem to know anything about it! The state needs to stop the chaos, slow down and further study this before there are 175 foot poles with 8 foot diameter bases in our land that will be here FOREVER! How much studying was done to see if we can incorporate our own wind generation locally? Much of this project is driven to sell the power further down the line. There is also much debate about just how much wind power this is carrying, with the majority of it seemingly coming from coal burning operations. Even if something new or better comes along and these are obsolete, they are here to stay. The standard poles we are used to seeing are approximately 40 feet so you can imagine the enormity of this project.

Over 400 residents representing Le Sueur, Rice & Scott County met at New Prague High School in New Prague on April 7 to address their questions, concerns & comments to Scott Ek representing the PUC & Craig Poorker, project representative. The project being addressed is the 237 mile 345 kilovolt transmission line proposed to be installed by CapX 2020 with construction slated to begin in 2010. Scott County has been chosen as having the preferred route and Le Sueur and Rice County designated as the alternate route. These routes are just proposed and could and most likely will change, we were told. This should be a concern for all residents regardless of where you live as it will impact entire communities pitting neighbor against neighbor, driving down property values and creating an unneeded eyesore for our natural, rural and agricultural areas.

Many people in attendance, who would be impacted by these lines, posed questions and concerns about the health aspects, aesthetics, damage to fields and wildlife. Some questions were answered but far too many were left unanswered or were answered with "we don't know". We farm just south of New Prague in Lanesburgh Township and as century farm owners of a working farm we are highly concerned and have spent well over 150 hours writing letters, informing residents and doing our own grassroots campaign against this project. There is evidence that demand has dropped and there are other means of energy that have not been fully explored including nuclear and localized wind power instead of blighting the countryside with these monstrous lines. Submitted by owners of Czech Country Farms, Shirley Gassman, Brenda Fromm, Jodi Prchal and husbands and children. 30901 State Highway 13 New Prague, Mn 56071. 952-758-3781.

## **B-007-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

---

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. [See yours in just 2 easy steps!](#)

From: wildhorsehills@aol.com [mailto:wildhorsehills@aol.com]  
Sent: Friday, July 17, 2009 7:03 AM  
To: Tim.Pawlenty@state.mn.us; Scott.Ek@state.mn.us; stephanie.strength@usda.gov  
Subject: High Voltage Power Line

Hi, I am writing to express my concerns and objections to the high voltage power line suggested route along 50th street in Webster, Minnesota. I run a show horse breeding operation with over \$100,000 in horses on my property. I feel this power line will be detrimental to the health of my livestock, and my business. Sincerely, Kathryn M. Ott, DVM

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## **B-008-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

**Kessler, Ellen**

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**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:32 AM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: More CapX2020 information...  
**Attachments:** scott ek letter.doc

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From: Mrsprchal@aol.com [mailto:Mrsprchal@aol.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 11:04 AM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: More CapX2020 information...

Please see attached...thanks much.

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**B-009-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded you comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.



Docket ET-2/TL-08-1474

April 14, 2009

Dear Mr. Scott Ek and the PUC,

I am writing regarding Section 15 and 16 of Lanesburg Township, in addition to the area west and east of these sections, particularly where the route begins cutting cross country from 300<sup>th</sup> St to 141<sup>st</sup> Ave. I am highly disappointed that the proposed line would be cutting through prime agricultural land when from day one of learning about this project this was one of the top concerns of the CapX2020 group. Following road right of ways was going to be a priority for this project, we were told. In addition this also impacts a number of homes that are close to the line as well, including daycares and many children who live and play near these lines.

I cannot even describe what emotional toll this is taking on the people of this area. This area is being impacted not only because of their homes but their agricultural businesses as well. Although they may not be out there with a suit and a tie, this is their BUSINESS!

How may this impact our business and those around us?

1. Compaction of soil is a great concern. When semis, excavators, cement trucks, cranes are all running over the land there is going to be compaction. In fact there are places that the mere buffalo trails can still be found and are still compacted to this day. Imagine what all of this equipment is going to do to the ground where a tiny seed needs to send out a sprout. A sprout means a crop and a crop means money for the farmer which means an impact on our BUSINESS. Who will be responsible for soil that is so compacted it will take many , many years ,if ever to get that yield back to where it was before this project?

2. Tile Breakage is another big worry. Running all through these fields are tiles that help to properly drain these fields. Large equipment can crack or break them. This may not be realized for years. Putting these tiles in was not cheap. Checking them to make sure they didn't get damaged costs money as well. And I cannot imagine the cost to replace them. This should be of great concern not only on our farmland but those east and west of us as well. Who will be responsible to make sure that tiles were not cracked or damaged and if they were who will pay for it? If the fields don't properly drain this means wet areas that can't be planted as soon as they could have, it means areas that remain wet or drowning long after they would have ,which means loss of crop which means loss of money which makes a negative impact on our BUSINESS.

3. Maintenance of the lines/poles: This is not just a one time deal. The building of this alone would be detrimental enough but now think about the future. I have to believe that these lines and poles will be subject to inspection and repair in the future. So now the soil has been compacted, tile lines may be damaged and land was taken away but this will never quit. It will forever go on. It can be said maintenance would be done in the winter but problems could occur anytime, even when the crops are growing. Who will be responsible if growing crops get damaged?

4. Working around poles: While I respect the fact that these are single pole structures, it is still a big obstacle for large equipment to try to maneuver around. Where once the

farmer could plant straight rows, now every row will be impacted due to the obstacles in the way. This is not just a minor inconvenience. If you are going around things you are wasting seed. And seed costs money to the tune of \$250 a bag in some cases. Now add the cost of extra fertilizer, chemical spray and time. It all adds up. This is not an exaggeration. This is real. Getting up and down off of the tractor to put the booms up and down to get around these poles is something we didn't have to do before and this is not just for one pole, it would be the entire length of the fields and for everyone across this area. Time is precious and valuable.

5. Now that this project has so negatively impacted the business aspect let's think about the human aspect. What was once an enjoyable time of planting and harvesting for generations working together for a common good (we have 3 generations working together in the field), we now have lines to be under and poles to work around. Depression is real and this project will be the root cause of it. As a mom I would not allow my children to ride in the tractors and the combine near these lines and since this affects pretty much the entire portion of the farm then their dreams have been crushed. We spend a lot of time running up and down the entire field picking rocks with a 4 wheeler. The kids actually enjoy this but having them under these lines is a risk I cannot expose them to. Who will be responsible for the emotional aspects that people will now experience?

6. Damage to farm equipment: Many times work must be done in the dark if there is a time factor involved during planting or harvesting. There is large equipment that is hard to turn. Trying to get around these poles without catching equipment is a big concern. In addition when plows are being used in the ground, there is a possibility of catching the cement pad under the pole. The costs of repairs are astronomical. Who will be liable for this if the operator is doing the best they can but an accident happens?

7. Huge metal grain bins with electrical motors for aeration, a corn dryer with electrical parts, old metal sheds, older tractors and combines which need chains behind them, electric fences that may stay on all the time..these are all real concerns. To get an electrician to come in and make sure things are properly grounded would be more expense for our business. This would not be cheap to get it checked, let alone to get it fixed. Who would be responsible for this bill since this is something that we would not have had to worry about prior to this proposed project? Who purchases the chains for each tractor? What if we have to cover a wet bin when an approaching electrical storm is coming, which has had to be done before? Who will want to climb up there and possibly be electrocuted? It may sound minor to those who want this project to go through but they are nonetheless real to us who will have to live with it FOREVER!

8. If this project is truly needed (which I am still opposed to due to lack of enough studies) then alternatives that should be highly considered and not dismissed due to length or cost should be:

- a. Put the entire line underground: this would eliminate so much of the opposition and in the long run may be just as cost effective. Studies should be done to make it a more

viable option. Perhaps with more research this could be done. This would also eliminate the visual fear factor of making us targets for terrorists and the entire EMF fear.

b. Follow road right of ways and then bury the line in sensitive areas where there are organic farms or highly populated areas close to the road. This would be more of a give and take type approach for CapX instead of just a taking approach.

c. Follow 190 and 35W. This should not be dismissed. There is already existing right of ways and the impact to homeowners would be minimal since there are not many homes on a freeway and if there are, they are further back. The amount of land needlessly taken from hard working people would be minimal. The complaints those landowners are going to have will never end either. Staying on a freeway would decrease the impact to a large portion of the state of Minnesota and make this project more user friendly in the eyes of everyone.

In closing, I just want to say that the PUC should be looking out for all of us. We all work hard to get where we are. We have emotional and family ties to the places that could be destroyed forever while we try to do our part by recycling and conserving energy. Please consider this project carefully and take into account the number of lives being affected due to one project.

Submitted by Daniel and Jodi Prchal and their children in care of Czech Country Farms  
30901 State Hwy 13 New Prague MN 56071. 952-758-4213.

## COMMENT FORM

Public Scoping Meetings

We need your input. Please take a few minutes to provide your comments or questions for the USDA RUS Federal Environmental Impact Statement process and return your completed form today or mail by June 29, 2009. Your comments help in the planning and implementation of the project. **Thank you.**

Completing this form will automatically add you to our mailing list. If you prefer to not be on the mailing list, please check the box below.

☐ I do not wish to be on the project mailing list

Which meeting did you attend? Winningo

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

- ☐ Project Purpose and Need
- ☐ Visual / Aesthetic resources
- ☐ Proximity to residences
- ☒ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)
- ☐ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)
- ☐ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)
- ☐ Historic and cultural sites
- ☐ Radio or television interference
- ☐ Noise
- ☐ Health and safety
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

*The projected line along the Highway 60 route will be traveling through land that has been purchased, ~~improved~~ improved and maintained for four generations. The poles will be placed in productive agriculture fields, disrupting the pattern tile lines that are being used. The poles will also be a place for weeds to grow and spread throughout the fields. The lines will also take away productive land that can not and will not be used for production agriculture again. Will the destroyed tile lines be repaired in a timely matter, if repaired at all?*

B-010-002

Hampton • Rochester • La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project



If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

- ☒ Agriculture ☐ Residential ☐ Conservation Easement  
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

*Wanamingo Township, section 31 and 32*

In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, ect.) in the Project area and why?

*Agriculture is the most sensitive resource in this project area. The proposed route will travel through thousands and thousands of acres of productive agricultural land. Installing and maintaining these lines will cause severe compaction on the agricultural land, causing damage of land, making it unproductive. How much will the power companies be willing to pay per month for the use of our land to place these poles in?*

#### B-010-001

Your comment has been noted. RUS anticipates that the CapX2020 Utilities would provide compensation in the form of a one-time easement payment to property owners who host transmission lines. Property owners would retain ownership of the land and may continue to use the land around transmission structures. RUS anticipates that the CapX2020 Utilities would work with property owners to negotiate easement payments after the permitting process.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

#### B-010-002

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts resulting from construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line will be addressed in resource sections throughout the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

B-010-001

In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?

*It was not explained at all. Land owners of the affected area had to find out information by asking questions and hoping they were the right questions.*

Please tell us how to reach you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: *Elroy Flom, Brian Flom, Valerie Miller, Valerie Ashland, Joanne Flom*

Representing (Optional): *Flom Family Farm*

Mailing Address: *44241 70th Ave*

City: *Kenyon* State: *MN* Zip Code: *55946*

Daytime Phone (Optional): *(507) 789-6634*

Public participation for the Federal, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permitting processes will be ongoing for the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project. If you sign up for the mailing list, you will be notified when opportunities to participate are being planned.

Please plan to continue your involvement in the process and provide your comments. We appreciate your input.

**Kessler, Ellen**

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**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:32 AM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: CapX 2020 Project  
**Attachments:** capxletter.doc; Reasons to avoid the LeSueur.doc

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From: Mrsprchal@aol.com [mailto:Mrsprchal@aol.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 10:57 AM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CapX 2020 Project

Please read the attached letter regarding the proposed CapX project. Thanks, Jodi Prchal

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**A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. [See yours in just 2 easy steps!](#)**

**B-011-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

Reasons to avoid the LeSueur/Rice County Alternate Route (300<sup>th</sup> St/County Road 28/Rice County 2/60<sup>th</sup> St) according to the EIS statement and the PUC factors that are considered in route determination:

1. Human Settlements
  - a. Would destroy the rural integrity of the area.
  - b. Cultural Resources-Many century plus family farms would be impacted...many go back to the founding fathers of this area. Would also impact a cemetery in Rice County along Rice County 2. Landowners are proud of their land, many having had this land passed down for generations with the intent to continue to do so. Although CapX claims to have followed section lines/fence lines that really does not mean much since it is still not following any existing right of way and would impact still impact the landowners on both sides and in many cases it is going in the middle of fields.
  - c. Land Use-The alternate line runs close to towns that are growing and will continue to do so. Developing of the land may be inevitable and a high voltage line would greatly devalue the land values that could have been much higher if there was no line. Also when non existing right of ways are used the entire right of way must be given by the landowner and in addition many of these locations would be affected as far as buildability in the future. In some locations the only feasible place to ever expand the operation or build a home is right where the line would be. This is just not fair if there are existing right of ways that can be used.
  - d. Socioeconomics-The alternate lines runs not only near but through many businesses. There are at least two daycares, many acres of farm fields (which when having to go around poles requires more time, spray, seed, and compaction of soil reducing the yield as well as possible breaking of field tiles), Kajer Organic Dairy Operation, working hay field operations, buffalo ranch, horse ranches, Pieper Dairy Operation, a woodworking business (Nytes), organic gardens and poultry operations which require electric fence, etc.
  - e. Community Services
  - f. Utility Systems-The line would pass through several gas pipelines-(south of New Prague and near Lonsdale). As in the case of Section 15/16 Lanesburgh township there is already an MVEC Electric line on the west side of Hwy 13/21 but on the east side of the highway is a bigger 69 KV transmission line as well.
  - g. Traffic/Transportation: There is a working railroad in section 15 Lanesburgh Township where trains run many times daily. The line would cross over the tracks in this section. There was information regarding possible issues with railroads in the application book. Crop Dusters may have issues and crop dusters are used in this area. There is also an airport near Webster which I know had concerns.
  - h. Safety and Health: EMF's are a concern for everyone including those on the alternate route. The alternate route follows small and narrow county and township roads where homes were allowed to be close to the road. Given that the road itself is narrow and the home can be close to the road it should be clear that there is not much area to work with compared to following a larger road where there is more right of way to begin with. There are many concerns about electric fences, fuel tanks, grain dryers, metal grain bins, metal sheds, large older tractors and combines that can all have affects from the high voltage lines. In many areas this



would pass extremely close or over these structures. During construction there would be dust and traffic issues. We have a developmentally challenged adult living on the farm. We also have asthma issues as well.

- i. Noise- Many people in the rural areas keep their windows open all spring, summer and fall so noise would be heard from the lines.
2. Natural Environment:
  - a. Air Quality/Climate
  - b. Geology/Soils- We have prime ag land being threatened. The rich soil is perfect to grow beautiful crops. We know of other farmers who have had to deal with projects like this(just this past winter) and have had many issues with soil compaction. With large equipment there is no denying that the ground will become compacted and there is significant research that shows this will affect the yield for many years to come. It makes no sense to be affecting entire fields to get into the middle of them to place poles. When maintenance is needed, perhaps in the middle of a growing season the fields will be disrupted again for generations to come.
  - c. Water Resources- This line would affect wetland areas all along the area, would cross streams and cut through marshes. Many are also wondering how this will affect their private well.
  - d. Wetlands- The DNR/University of MN and private homeowners have all made attempts to maintain areas for natural preservation for wildlife. Documentation for most areas was submitted in public comments regarding this. This should be highly considered when doing an EIS.
  - e. Biological Resources- Eagle nests and birds have been witnessed where the lines would be placed, in addition to many species of animals and birds that make their homes in the ever decreasing natural areas. The increase in housing in the area has really made the areas that are left natural very desirable and vulnerable.

#### Economic and Land Use Resources

- a. Agriculture-touched on above already but very important as these are not only family farms but businesses as well. There is also a tree farm(Al Dietz). The alternate route in these counties takes a hard hit at the farm fields and the natural areas when it cuts cross country. It doesn't make sense to further hurt the agriculture sector when it is up against so much already and should be preserved.
- b. Forestry- Again going cross country would deplete some natural wooded areas. These counties were part of the "Big Woods".
- c. Mining- I am not familiar with the mining in this area.
- d. Recreation/Tourism- There are many places to hunt which get used heavily in the fall/winter/spring. Because the area is growing there are less and less places to hunt. Snowmobile trails run under the lines in many locations.

In discussions with many residents about this issue everyone feels that this line should be run from Brookings south on 29, east on I 90, and then north on 35W. Substations could be built closer south or follow 14/99 and wind toward 35W. Another idea was to utilize underground mitigation near populated areas. Because of the sensitivity of the Le Sueur Crossing from an Environmental standpoint, cross in Belle Plaine and if homes/schools are an issue then start underground there and utilize the proposed extension of Scott County Road 2(see map Appendix B5 Sheet CH 29-

gray line) from 169 and follow it utilizing underground as needed. If the LeSueur Crossing must be utilized there are other roads that could be used(to avoid the Pyrotechnic factory) to connect up to this County Road 2 extension. I am not as familiar with these roads but many of them on the map showed very few homes on some of them.

No matter which route you go there are going to be homes close to the road, children waiting for busses under it or playing or sleeping under it. But to criss cross through the countryside upsetting natural preserved areas, following narrow roads or no road at all, cutting through private businesses, destroying entire family farms really does not make environmental, economical or ethical sense. I would welcome any further questions anyone may have or clarifications.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Jodi Prechal, Czech Country Farms, Sections 15,16, 26 Lanesburgh Township  
32155 Sanborn Dr Montgomery MN 56069  
952-758-4213

Dan and Jodi Prechal, Czech Country Farms  
30584 State Hwy 13  
New Prague, MN 56069  
952-758-4213

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing this letter with the concern over property we own and currently farm in Lanesburg Township sections 15 and 16, however we are concerned about the sections around this area as well. This concerns docket number ET-2 E002/CN-06-1115. I feel as though I am writing with a double edged sword as our current residence is also under consideration which is located at 32155 Sanborn Dr. Montgomery. This is where we currently live (County Road 28), however we own and farm the other property and have discussed the possibility of someday building a home at the above location. Our main concern is why the proposed powerline follows County Road 28 east out of Le Sueur and then diverts north and then east and south again to meet up again with County Road 28 again. I would like to make it clear that my residence is actually in the section that is being diverted and I don't necessarily want a powerline to go past my home here either, but feel that it makes no sense to ruin farms, woods and other natural areas across the township. Should this end up the final route selected, the line should continue in the rightful location along the road right of way ( County Road 28 to Lonsdale) or follow a path along other section lines and existing roadways. It crosses into prime farmland and natural wetland areas and directly through our 100 year old family farm. We operate almost 80 acres of corn and soybeans. This land was founded by our Czech ancestors and handed down through many generations and will continue to be handed down to my children and their children. There is an occupied home there now, but we have plans that someday a new home could be built preferably north of the existing building site, perhaps even by our children. We have also discussed the possibility of wind generation of our own. I was saddened to look online and see exactly where this line was being proposed and even more saddened after attending the meeting and finding out there is a wide area on each side of the line that would be the right of way of the line and no new homes could ever be built in this area. So now out of almost 100 acres, there is really no desirable place left for a new home or windmill to ever be built. The land has wetland areas as well and is divided by a highway, a creek and bordered by a railroad. Stray voltage for cattle is also a concern that this powerline brings to farmers as well. It is also easy to say that a pole could be in the middle of a field, however the impact will be felt by that farmer every time they have to try to go around poles with large equipment. As just one example of this, it would involve getting off the tractor to adjust the planter many times to get the planting completed. Combines are not easy to maneuver either.

We are also concerned about the lack of knowledge as to what Phases 2 and 3 entail. We asked at the meeting but the rep did not know. We are concerned about the possibility of even more lines continuing to cut through our farm. We would like to know what the future plans are if Phase 1 is approved.

This past weekend we drove the route that this line is being proposed and hope that you have representatives that actually get out and visit the areas you are proposing to go

through and not just look at aerial maps. When we drove the route we could not imagine a huge towering powerline cutting through all the beautiful farms and natural areas, as well as right through property owner's yards. Some of these homeowners actually paid a significant amount of money to bury the lines around their home so they would not have to see them. Now imagine the feeling they have that a 175 foot pole with 8 wires could be going through that same property. We also drove County Road 28 from the point it diverts into the countryside to the point it comes back to 28 and it is true that there are homes along this road, which there are homes along the entire stretch of 28 anyhow. Many of the homes where it is being diverted have homes that are set back quite a way or their view is blocked by trees. There are also long stretches where there are no homes at all or just a few. Some stretches also have no powerlines at all. An existing roadway right of way is quite honestly, the better option if the need is approved as those homeowners are already living with existing lines. But to go through sections of townships does not make sense. The growth of New Prague is pushing south all the time. In fact the city has annexed property not too far north of the farm. With this in mind, generations from now the cities of New Prague and Montgomery will likely be one.. If the growth potential or number of homes along County Road 28 is too great then perhaps looking at a different location altogether would be a solution. Perhaps the location north of New Prague would be better suited for this or perhaps more research should be done on this entire project. Maybe there is a better way to deliver and transport the power. In addition, the CapX Project has all along said this to deliver wind power, but in fact after I did some research, found that over half of the energy is actually coming from coal burning plants, which we do not support. Coal burning plants emit large amounts of toxins into our environment, polluting it even more than it is already and adding to the effects of global warming. We worry about the future of my children and their children to have to live in a world that we are destroying. We talk about leaving our environmental footprints behind...what type of footprint would be left with towering poles and wires stretching across the countryside? I will leave you with a photo we took of our children a few years back. They are innocently looking across the farm that one day they will inherit. Our son especially lives and breathes for John Deere and farming. Please remember that when you make the decisions for this project that you are not just impacting the land itself but hopes and dreams of actual people. Please contact us anytime at 952-758-4213 or [mrsprchal@aol.com](mailto:mrsprchal@aol.com) to further discuss this. Thank You, Dan and Jodi Prchal and children



Looking west across the land....